

**NH DHHS – DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
NEW HAMPSHIRE PUBLIC HEALTH NETWORK SERVICES RFP
BIDDERS' CONFERENCE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
March 16, 2009
Updated March 23, 2009 and March 31, 2009**

Note: () Indicate clarifying language that has been added.

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
	12	10.6.3 Workplan	N/A	DPHS clarified during the presentation that the workplan section of each proposal will be assigned 30 points for the purpose of scoring the proposal. This results in a total of 100 possible points.
1.	N/A	Budget	What out of state travel is allowed/expected during the SFY?	DPHS would look for one out of state trip during the year. Would consider national NACCHO preparedness conference, national MRC meeting or other National or New England regional conference linked to the scope of work.
2.		Key personnel sheet	If we plan on hiring an assistant during the year between April – June, do we have to specify in the proposal?	Specify in proposal when they are to be hired, qualification and skills you would look for, and send us a resume when available.
3.	7	Eligibility	Regarding Letter of Support: would one letter signed by three people do?	Yes, do not need separate letters. DPHS is looking for an indication that regional partners are supporting the proposal. If Point of Contact (POC) is not funded by this award, then just the POC needs to sign the letter.
4.	7	Eligibility	If combining two regions – do you require a letter from each RCC?	The requirement is for a letter signed by any 3 people from within the region listed in the table in the RFP.
5.	N/A	Page 2 of PowerPoint presentation, slide 5 National Health Security Strategy Goals	Is the focus on Emergency Preparedness? Or would it include other Essential (Public Health) Services?	The focus and purpose of this funding is to support activities described in Exhibit A (Public Health Emergency Preparedness)
6.	N/A	Letters of Intent	Will DPHS let bidders know if someone else applies (from the same region)	DPHS generally does not inform agencies submitting bids who else from their region may also submit a bid.

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
7.	3	Section 1. Purpose of RFP	In the last sentence of the first paragraph, it mentions “broader public health initiatives...”. What might they be?	DPHS would like agencies to be open to (future) possibilities and be willing to partner and help grow other public health initiatives were the state to get funding for work beyond emergency preparedness.
8.	N/A	Page 2 of PowerPoint presentation, slide 6, National Health Security Strategy Goals - Integration	This addresses emergency preparedness but does it include integration of other public health initiatives?	No, this is specific to public health and emergency preparedness
9.	8	Letter of Intent	Are the Letters of Intent public info?	DPHS stated we would need to follow up and provide a response, which is as follows. The names of bidders cannot be provided until the RFP process has closed and the contract(s) have been approved by Governor and Executive Council. At that time, the names of the bidders become public information unless there was some provision for secrecy in the RFP notice itself (such as a provision to keep proprietary information confidential). There is no such provision in this RFP.
10.	16	Cancellation	What is the plan if there is no proposal submitted from each region?	We are seeking statewide coverage. DPHS will see what is received. If there is no response, we will either re-bid, or if a region(s) is not ready, we potentially could provide smaller amounts of funding for planning grants.
11	5 & 6	Background Table of 15 Regions	Question regarding Region numbering: If a Region has not changed or combined, why did the number change?	The number of regions went from 19 to 15 so numbering of regions changed statewide. DPHS’ preference to move away from numbers in the future and use names for regions. Another important point is that this RFP does not necessarily address that there could be additional consolidation of regions in the future (as a result of the regionalization initiative). .
12.	N/A	N/A	Can we change the name of our Region?	Yes

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
13.	7	Eligibility	Our Regional Coordinating Committee agreed to incorporate a new agency to provide these services for the existing Northern & Southern (All Health Hazards Regions). We have a concern that all the required paperwork will not be done before the RFP deadline.	The best course of action is to find an existing agency that would apply to become the grantee and once the 501c(3) has been formed, then PDHS can do a Governor & Council letter to change the Fiscal Agent. DPHS needs a legal entity to award the funds to. (Additional information: DPHS has contacted the office of the NH Secretary of State and confirmed that incorporation papers to do business in the state are processed within a few days so long as all the required paperwork has been filed. These papers allow for a Certificate of Good Standing to be issued, which is what is required for a contract to be approved by the Governor and Executive Council. The DPHS will accept a proposal so long as it includes documentation that the initial paperwork has been filed.
14.	7	Eligibility	Does it have to be a 501 c(3)?	Se page 7 of RFP. (Additional information: No. The DPHS has also confirmed that designation as a 501 (3) is not necessary in order to enter into a contract).
15.	7	Eligibility	What is the definition of non-profit? 501 c(3)?	Doesn't specifically say this will follow up on it. (Additional information: 501 c (3) status is federal and issued by the IRS.
16.	N/A	Page 4 of PowerPoint, Slide 12, Second Bullet re: Gaps	Who determines existing gaps for a region?	DPHS looks to entities responding to the RFP. If there are entities responding that have not been involved in this work in the past, the DPHS will provide information
17	3	Section 1. Purpose	Other than combining regions, how will the level of funding be determined?	Look toward how we have awarded funding in the past. The review process will look at the proposed scope of work and budget as well.
18	N/A		Will retroactivity be granted if new contracts are not in place for July 1?	The section will request retroactivity if necessary. However, both the DPHS director and DHHS commissioner need to approve this request and the Governor & Council have to agree as well. The DPHS does not want lapses in services.

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
19.	5	Background Information	Will the Regions be defined by the effective date of the RFP?	The regions are defined in RFP unless there are proposals that propose further consolidation of these regions.
20	13	Section 10. Proposal Requirements and Scoring Criteria, 10.6.4, #3	Question regarding the Sources of Revenue Form (outside revenues). Example: We receive a Capacity Building Grant from NACCHO for Medical Reserve Corps work. Should we report only money available after July 1 st , or before?	The form should include what revenue you expect from other sources for SFY 10 (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010).
21	10	Proposal Requirements and Scoring Criteria	Regarding regions that are transitioning: Could a proposal contain more planning related activities (start-up)?	Yes. DPHS recognizes there would be a different process and workplan necessary for an agency that is just starting up that would be different than other regions that have been supported with these funds in the past. We would want the history and priority activities of a region reflected in the workplan.
22.	3	Purpose of the RFP and Available Funding	Please clarify the consolidation of 19 regions into 15 and what that means in terms of the difference between \$60,000 and \$100,000 awards Both lists are in the RFP.	As stated in the RFP a preference for a higher level of funding will be given for proposals that include two or more of the 19 All Health Hazard Regions that have already been consolidated or any submitted that propose further consolidation of two or more of these 15 Regions.
23.	3, 11	Purpose of the RFP and Available Funding, Proposal Review and Evaluation	Regarding the consolidation of regions, clarify how to submit a proposal if consolidation is not complete before the proposal is due. How do we proceed?.	DPHS is happy to receive a single proposal for each of 15 regions. However, more than one agency can apply for the same region as well.
24.	3	Purpose of the RFP and Available Funding	Grant money received in the past was \$75,000. The RFP says \$60,000 - \$100,000, with preference to merged Regions. Could regions that have not consolidated apply for more than they were awarded last year?	Any bidder can submit for an amount between \$60,000 - \$100,000. Preference for the higher amount goes to those combining regions as listed in the RFP. Final award levels will also be based on the quality of the proposal, budget, etc.
25.	8.	5. Procurement Timetable	Reminder: Letters of Intent are due by Close of Business (4:30 p.m.) on Friday, March 20, 2009. Thank you for your attendance.	

Questions received 3/17/09 to-3/20/09 – and their Answers

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	N/A	N/A	Please clarify the April 16 th meeting date about the new forms. This date is beyond the date that the final grant proposal is due to DHHS.	This meeting will be open to those agencies the Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) is recommending to receive an award and is specific to documents required to complete a contract, not the Request for Proposals (RFP).
2.	N/A	N/A	There is some question as to whether or not the capacity assessment should still be completed in lieu of the consolidation of two public health networks into one. Could you please clarify this?	The DPHS supports continuing to move the capacity assessment process, which is a component of the broader public health regionalization initiative, along as expeditiously as possible during the current period in which bids are being solicited for agencies to provide Public Health Network (PHN) Services in SFY 10. In areas of the state where there is a consolidation of All Health Hazards Regions as described in the RFP for Public Health Network Services, the Division believes that the findings of assessments conducted jointly by partners in different regions can inform proposal(s) submitted in response to the RFP.
3.	10	Required materials	Is the RFP going to made available in MS word format? When do you anticipate the attachments being available on-line? When do you anticipate the bidder conference Q&A and PowerPoint presentation being available?	All of these materials were sent to all agencies submitting a letter of intent before the close of business on March 20, 2009.

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
4.	7	Eligibility	<p>Concerning the required letters of support, which format do you prefer?</p> <p>a) One single letter with at least three partner signatures at bottom</p> <p>b) At least three uniquely written letters, from different regional partners, or</p> <p>c) At least three copies of the <i>same</i> letter, each signed by a different regional partner</p>	<p>The requirement for a letter of support can be met in two ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signed only by the All Health Hazards Region's (AHRH) designated Point of Contact (POC) when the POC is not an employee of the agency submitting the proposal. 2. Signed by members of the Regional Coordinating Committee that represents three or more municipalities and/or partner agencies when the POC is an employee of the agency submitting the proposal. <p>Letters of support meeting the criteria above meet the requirement. The DPHS has no preference as to which option, as described in the question that was asked, is used to meet the requirement.</p>
5.	7	Eligibility	<p>How can the requirement for a letter of support be met when more than one agency in a region is submitting a proposal and when the Point the Contact is employed by one of these agencies?</p>	<p>DPHS will consider the requirement is met when:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The agency that employs the POC meets the criteria listed in #2 above. 2. Other agencies in the same region submit a letter of support signed by members of the Regional Coordinating Committee that represent three or more municipalities and/or partner agencies.
6.	17-19	Exhibit A	<p>Exhibit A includes required activities that some regions have previously received supplemental funding to conduct under the Cities Readiness Initiative. It also includes activities related to the Medical Reserve Corps that each All Health Hazard Region received supplemental funds for during SFY 09. Will any additional funds be made available during SFY 10 to conduct these activities?</p>	<p>At this time the state does not anticipate having supplemental funds available to award under either of these programs.</p>

Questions received 3/23/09 to-3/27/09 – and their Answers

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	20	Exhibit A	Does Exhibit A from the Public Health Network (PHN) RFP need to be completed and submitted with the proposal? In our prior submission it was submitted with accompanying signatures by the Town Administrator and Grant Administrator.	The Exhibit does not need to be signed as part of the proposal package. It does need to be signed when contract documents are submitted.
2.	30	Budget	Could you please tell me if there are any restrictions or preferences for conferences PHN staff can attend using PHN funds? Is the NACCHO Public Health Preparedness Summit preferred? Would the American Public Health Association conference be acceptable?	As indicated in the presentation given at the Bidders' Conference, use of contract funds to attend the NACCHO Preparedness Summit and/or the National Medical Reserve Corps conference is preferred. Attendance at other national or New England regional preparedness-related conferences will also be allowed. Travel to other conferences, such as the American Public Health Association, would be considered for approval when the intent is to clearly focus on preparedness related topics and this conference is in addition to, but not in lieu of, attendance at one other national preparedness conference.
3.	19	Exhibit A	Could you provide more information on Post-Event recovery? Is it to do with restoring public health services after an event?	The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified 3 critical tasks in this area: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and coordinate plans for long-term tracking of those affected by the event. 2. Improve systems to support long-term tracking of cases, exposures, and adverse event reports. 3. Increase the availability of information resources and messages to foster communities return to self-sufficiency.

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
4.	33	Comprehensive General Liability Insurance Acknowledgement Form	The RFP addresses the issue of general liability insurance. As a new corporation with no funds, do we need to include a proof of coverage in the initial proposal? If so, can we use grant funding to pay for it?	A letter stating that an agency will meet the requirement immediately following approval of an agreement by the Governor and Executive Council is sufficient. Yes, grant funds can be used to pay for the cost of the insurance.
5.	17	Exhibit A	Can you give some resources to research health status data?	This Division of Public Health Services' website includes some information and includes links to other sources. http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/HSDM/default.htm Bidders are also encouraged to contact the community education program at local hospitals, community health centers, and providers of other public health programs (ex. tobacco prevention, maternal and child health services, etc.) for data.
6.	26	Proposal Checklist	Can we use documents from a proposal we submitted in SFY 09 for this new proposal for SFY 10?	No, the DPHS has provided electronic versions of all the documents that are required to be included in a proposal. The DHHS and the Office of the Attorney General have made both subtle and significant changes to some forms used in SFY 09, so those should not be used in SFY 10.
7.	19	Exhibit A	"Participate in an initiative led by the DPHS to develop public health regions" Please define what this participation will be.	Paragraph 1.2 of the "Strengthening Public Health System Capacity" section of Exhibit A describes 3 specific activities that together define "participation".

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
8.	20	Exhibit A	<p>“Sponsor and organize the logistics for at least two trainings/in-services for municipal public health officers that address their role in public health emergency planning and other core public health competencies. Collaborate with the DPHS and the NH Institute of Public Health Practice to implement these training programs.”</p> <p>How restrictive will this be? If we find available training outside of NH that is very appropriate to the overall goals of emergency response, that is more appropriate for our region, will you not allow grant funds to be used to participate?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The underlying purpose of this activity to improve access to trainings held locally for municipal health officers who serve in towns throughout a region. Providing such trainings locally also increases coordination and collaboration among the region’s health officers. 2. Support for trainings offered locally by out of state providers would also be an allowable expense. 3. Supporting local health officers to attend trainings out of state would also be an allowable expense, so long as it is not burdensome for the majority of health officers in the region to travel to such trainings. 4. Out of state travel is also allowable for supervisors of staff funded under this agreement so long as it is consistent with the priorities discussed in question 2 above.
9.	20	Exhibit A	<p>Collaborate with the Community Health Institute to develop a technical assistance plan specific to region.</p> <p>If we feel that we do not need Community Health Institute assistance in addition, would we be required to collaborate with them anyway?</p>	<p>No, but the agency will need to demonstrate how they will receive technical assistance as needed to meet the required activities. However, all agencies will be required to participate in bi-monthly technical assistance and networking meetings.</p>

	PG. NO.	SECTION REFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER
10.	14	Procedures for Bidder Selection and Notification	When the Letters Of Intent and Requests For Proposals are made public, will they be accompanied by the scoring points and reasons for those scores? Or will those be released separately? In what time frame will they all be made public?	<p>The DHHS is required to include quantitative scoring information as part of the final agreement submitted for approval to the Governor and Executive Council.</p> <p>As required by NH RSA 21-I:13(a) no information regarding proposals submitted in response to an invitation to bid is publicly available until the bid is actually awarded.</p> <p>NHRSA 91-A:4 requires state agencies to make available for inspection and copying any such governmental records within its files. Such documents and records would be released in accordance with RSA 21-I:13 (a).</p>
11.	30	Budget form	On the budget form, what do you intend the “other funds” column to represent?	The “other” line item should be used for any costs that do not meet the definitions of any of the other budget lines.
12.	5	Background Information	Are the populations of each region (based on the 15 new regions of the RFP) available?	See the attached worksheet.
13.	19	Exhibit A	<p>“Refer to the DPHS regional partners, including municipal officers, interested in sponsoring informational sessions conducted by DPHS.”</p> <p>Can you please provide some further guidance on this scope of service?</p>	This requirement will be met by grantees providing contact information for DPHS staff to all individuals and agencies seeking information about the initiative to develop public health regions.
14.	17	Exhibit A	One of our frustrations with the way monies have been allocated for training has been that training for the governmental public health workers, the ones who are actually legally required to respond in emergencies, is often denied in favor of training non-governmental contract workers, such as the majority of the public health coordinators. Will there be expanded funding to actually build true governmental public health infrastructure this grant round?	The purpose of the DPHS entering into agreements to support the Institute for Local Public Health Practice and the Community Health Institute is specific to increasing training opportunities for both governmental and non-governmental public health system partners. This is consistent with the CDC’s priorities. The DPHS does not anticipate having expanded funding available to support these agreements during SFY 10.